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Message Text

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62
ORIGIN COME-00

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 OFA-01 OES-03 AF-06 EB-07

INT-05 CG-00 DOTE-00 PM-04 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 L-03 DLOS-04 SAL-01

SS-15 NSC-05 /094 R

DRAFTED BY COMM/NOAA/NMFS:GOTTEMOELLER
APPROVED BY OES/OFA/FA:LMNAKATSU
COMM/NOAA/NMFS:MKRAVANJA
COMM/NOAA/NMFS:HBEASLEY
STATE-EUR/WE:JLIMPRECHT 632-07L9
STATE-OES/OFA
---------- 010331
R 101538Z FEB 76
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY MADRID
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMCONSUL CASABLANCA
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY RABAT

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS:EFIS, SP, UR

SUBJECT:SOVIET FISHING VESSEL ACTIVITIES OFF AFRICA

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE, QUOTED IN PART, APPEARED IN THE WASHINGTON POST OF SATURDAY JANUARY 31, 1976:

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SOVIET FISHING TRAWLERS BASED AT SPAIN'S CANARY ISLANDS ARE

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RANGING AS FAR SOUTH AS ANGOLA FOR ELECTRONIC MONITORING OF
U.S.-BACKED FORCES FIGHTING IN THE FORMER PORTUGUESE COLONY,
A HIGH SPANISH OFFICIAL SAID TODAY.

UNDER AN AGREEMENT WITH SPAIN, THE SOVIET UNION HAS DOCKING
RIGHTS FOR ITS FISHING FLEET IN THE CANARIES, 75 MILES OFF
THE SPANISH SAHARA - WHERE MOROCCAN TROOPS CLASHED THIS
WEEK WITH ALGERIAN FORCES TRYING TO SUPPLY DESERT GUERRILLAS

THE SOURCE SAID THAT SPANISH INTELLIGENCE HAD INTERCEPTED
CODED MESSAGES FROM TRAWLERS OFF ANGOLA TO THE SOVIET
MEDITERRANEAN FLEET AS WELL AS MESSAGES FROM TRAWLERS OFF
MOROCCO AND THE SAHARA ON THE FIGHTING THERE. IT COULD NOT
BE LEARNED WHETHER THE SPANIARDS HAVE CRACKED THE SOVIET
CODE BUT THE SOURCE MADE IT CLEAR THAT U.S. INTELLIGENCE
IS AWARE OF THE ACTIVITIES OF TRAWLERS IN BOTH AREAS OF

CONFLICT. END UNCLASSIFIED.

2. BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE. THE NATIONAL MARINE
FISHERIES SERVICE (NMFS), NOAA, COMMERCE, WOULD
APPRECIATE EMBASSY'S APPRAISAL OF THE ABOVE ARTICLE. THE
SUBJECT IS OF GREAT INTEREST TO NMFS, AS WELL AS TO OTHER
GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, SINCE WE CONTINUOUSLY RECEIVE
REQUESTS FOR CLARIFICATION OF SUCH NEWSPAPER ITEMS.

3. IN THE PAST, BASED ON EXTENSIVE CONTACTS WITH SOVIET
FISHERMEN AND FLEETS, NMFS HAS HAD LITTLE CAUSE TO
BELIEVE THAT BONA FIDE SOVIET FISHING VESSELS ENGAGE IN
INTELLIGENCE WORK. THE TRAWLERS, WITH ONLY STANDARD
RADIO RECEIVERS, WOULD BE POORLY EQUIPPED FOR ELECTRONIC
MONITORING OPERATIONS. (SOVIET "SPY SHIPS", MANY OF
WHICH DO HAVE THE HULLS OF FISHING TRAWLERS, ARE
CONSPICUOUSLY LOADED WITH ANTENNAE AND RADAR, AND SO ARE
EASILY IDENTIFIABLE.) HOWEVER, THE FISHING FLEET MAY IN
THIS CASE BE PRESSED INTO DOUBLE DUTY AS AN INTELLIGENCE
GATHERING UNIT IN AREAS OF SPECIAL INTEREST SUCH AS THE
COASTS OF ANGOLA AND THE SPANISH SAHARA.

4. ANY ADDITIONAL DETAILS WHICH THE EMBASSY MAY OBTAIN
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WOULD BE GREATLY APPRECIATED. UNCLASSIFIED INFORMATION
WOULD BE ESPECIALLY USEFUL IN ANSWERING INQUIRIES.
END LIMITED OFFICIAL USE. KISSINGER

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NNN

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